

Service Date: February 4, 1987

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE REGULATION  
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

\* \* \* \* \*

IN THE MATTER of the Investigation )	UTILITY DIVISION
by the Montana Public Service )	
Commission of the Gas Acquisition )	DOCKET NO. 87.2.6
Practices of Montana-Dakota )	
Utilities Company. )	ORDER NO. 5256

\* \* \* \* \*

ORDER INITIATING INVESTIGATION

\* \* \* \* \*

FINDINGS OF FACT

On January 26, 1987, the Montana Public Service Commission (Commission) voted to undertake an investigation into the gas acquisition practices of Montana-Dakota Utilities Company (MDU).

This action was taken in response to the Commission's concern over the possibility that Montana-Dakota Utilities has not acted and is not acting in the best interests of its Montana gas customers by having failed and by failing to procure a reliable supply of gas at the least possible cost.

The Commission will consult with interested parties in order to identify issues and to formulate procedures necessary to the disposition of this proceeding.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Montana-Dakota Utilities Company is a public utility, regulated in its Montana intrastate operations by the Montana Public Service Commission pursuant to Title 69, Montana Code Annotated (MCA).

2. Montana-Dakota Utilities Company is required to provide utility service at a just and reasonable cost and every unjust and unreasonable charge is prohibited and declared unlawful. 69-3-201, MCA.

3. The Montana Public Service Commission is empowered by statute to supervise, regulate, and investigate the operations of public utilities to ensure that charges for utility service are just and reasonable. 69-3-102, 69-3-103, 69-3-106 and 69-3-110, MCA.

#### ORDER

NOW THEREFORE IT IS ORDERED that the Montana Public Service Commission shall conduct an investigation into the gas acquisition practices of Montana-Dakota Utilities Company for the purpose of determining whether MDU has provided and is providing a reliable supply of gas to its Montana customers at a just and reasonable cost.

DONE AND DATED this 2nd day of February, 1987 by a vote of 4-1.

BY ORDER OF THE MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

---

CLYDE JARVIS, Chairman

---

JOHN B. DRISCOLL, Commissioner

---

HOWARD L. ELLIS, Commissioner

---

TOM MONAHAN, Commissioner

---

DANNY OBERG, Commissioner  
(Voting to Dissent)

ATTEST:

Ann Purcell  
Acting Secretary

(SEAL)

NOTE: Any interested party may request the Commission to reconsider this decision. A motion to reconsider must be filed within ten (10) days. See 38.2.4806, ARM.